

# LISA COHEN

## BACK TO CAPETOWN - Part One

Dedicated to the Backstreets of Apartheid

Who's selling the green zol  
- the motherless kind  
crushed with mandrax buttons  
Hey Charlie  
Let's crush it man  
So that I can rush out of my fucking brain  
and pull my lip over my head  
- so we'll forget that I'm a W H I T E  
and you're a K A F I R

Let's get high and talk about the Boere  
and when the riots will start  
I'll need to hide  
J U S T B E C A U S E I ' M W H I T E

And personally  
I could never explain or take blame  
for our government's hypocrisies

I ' M G O I N G C R A Z Y ! ! !  
Everywhere I look there's pain  
even the air  
cries Red with remorse  
There's blood splattered under my feet  
where I trudge the cobbled streets

A N D Y O U  
Mindlessly surviving  
with 3 kids and your wife  
Who live in a room  
smaller than my kitchen

Old Charlie  
who prefers Rehabilitation Chambers  
'cause there you're away from your underfed kids  
and wife who groans day in and day out  
- there you don't have to share your bed with 4 others  
And you can tell the guard to go fuck himself  
'cause you don't give a shit

The guys will still be doing it  
in the courtyard  
waiting for you  
at the thump of darkness

with their guitars  
making pipes  
And singing deliriously about Freedom  
in hysterical disbelief  
- while in the deadly alleys  
the Tsotsi Boys run wild  
They  
who'll rape a brick  
or sell their mother for a button

Oh Charlie  
I'm scared  
though I walk around with a tongue  
sharper than a snake  
My bottle ready to smash and attack  
While the old Moslem shrills at his heavenly post

I eat, talk, and sleep  
with you and your family  
But we can't even enjoy a Western movie together  
Because I A M A C O W B O Y  
and Y O U ' R E A N I N D I A N  
And we're still killing each other 200 years later

District six lies destroyed  
And families squat  
under tin and mucous  
While S I X C H U R C H E S  
stare from amongst the rubble and grit  
of broken minds

Oh Charlie  
I M U S T G O  
I can't look you in the eye  
without a tear  
and tears  
Won't relieve our pain  
So I must leave Charlie

For A M E R I C A  
where they've killed all the indians already  
and I won't have to look them in the eye

Los Angeles, September 24, 1984